

Cross-Cultural Instruction, Consciousness Raising, and Inviting Heightened Self-Esteem

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It is beyond debate that one's culture plays a significant role in the self-evaluative process. However, each particular culture uses different measurements to determine who will be crowned with respectability and who will not. The wider the gulf between the actual self and the culturally influenced ought self, the greater the chances are that one will experience a self-concept dominated by the negative. Deep cultural instruction in both the classroom and in counseling has the potential to assist one in recognizing that his or her self-esteem may be culture-bound. This realization has the potential to assist one in recognizing cultural irrationality and ameliorating culturally created personal assumptions that do not contribute to a happy and positive life.

In 1930, two Australian miners were searching for gold in a part of New Guinea where it was believed that few, if any, humans had ever been. The land was considered to be uninhabited and uninhabitable. Camped on a mountain ridge, at dusk, the receding daylight illuminated thousands of points of light that obviously came from campfires in the huge valley below. It was the first glimpse of a civilization that had existed untouched by the modern world; a civilization that had developed in isolation for thousands of years; a civilization of 50,000 people, living in the Stone Age, who were unaware that any other humans walked the earth.

In his book, *The Third Chimpanzee*, geographer Jared Diamond (1992) briefly discusses the amazing discovery and the shock experienced on both sides as an expedition from

the outside world finally entered the valley in 1938. It was a collision of two worlds; a collision whose magnitude was not only enhanced by extreme technological differences, but also by major gulfs in sexual mores, perceptions of worth and value, and assumptions on the nature of the world. There is not a single individual of the Grand Valley of New Guinea, born at least five or six years previous to the event, who does not remember exactly where he or she was at that surreal time, when the walls of their reality came tumbling down

In the decades since, the world of the Dani people of the Grand Valley has become more and more like our world. They have adopted many of the conveniences and technologies of the wider planetary expanse. In a subsequent book, the Pulitzer Prize winning

Guns, Germs, and Steel, Diamond (1999) asks another question. Why did European cultures come to dominate New Guinea culture instead of vice versa? Why weren't Europeans "discovered" by the New Guineans and afforded superior technological advantages originating in New Guinea? There are many proposed answers to this question, most of them knee-jerk and uncritically examined. Psychologist Steven Pinker (2002) sums up for us one of the more basic tenets of Diamond's explanation:

So Eurasia conquered the world not because Eurasians are smarter but because they could best take advantage of the principle that many heads are better than one. The "culture" of any of the conquering nations of Europe, such as Britain, is in fact a greatest-hits collection of inventions assembled across thousands of miles and years. The collection is made up of cereal crops and alphabetic writing from the Middle East, gunpowder and paper from China, domesticated horses from Ukraine, and many others. But the necessary insular cultures of Australia, Africa, and the Americas had to make do with a few homegrown technologies, and as a result they were no match for their pluralistic conquerors. Even within Eurasia and (later) the Americas, cultures that were isolated by mountainous geography—for example, in the Appalachians, the Balkans, and the Scottish highlands—remained backward for centuries in comparison with the vast network of people around them. (pp. 68-69)

If this theory is true, the advancement that Eurasia enjoyed was at least partially due to *what they were able to learn from different cultures* and their willingness to adopt and

change. Diamond (1999) also mentions that Eurasia had the market on animals and plants that were easily domesticated. But other cultures still had to be willing to adopt them. In the Americas, Africa, Australia, and New Guinea, the civilizations there were willing to adopt new ideas, but geography and lack of contact did not afford much opportunity for diverse ideas to spread. *The question is, if cross-cultural exposure can have huge effects on the macro level from one group to another, might such exposure, coupled with our willingness to adopt and change, be able to work its magic on the micro level in the lives of individual human beings?*

On the IAIE website, under *What is Invitational Education*, we read that it is a "model for understanding and communicating messages intended to summon forth the realization of human potential as well as for identifying and changing those forces that destroy potential" (IAIE, 2007). If the aforementioned assumptions and theories are true, cross-cultural exposure may have a significant effect on the realization of our students' potential. Conversely, one's particular culture often sends messages that have the tendency to inhibit one's potential rather than enhance it. Culture has the power to both bless and curse, to be inviting and disinviting.

Previous research has linked the knowledge of a second language with greater verbal ability in one's first language, greater flexibility in thinking, and a greater overall cognitive development (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2007; Lambert, 1963; Landry, 1973). Might exposure to diverse cultures call down similar, but maybe not identical, blessings? It is often said that borrowed words from other

languages enrich and make languages “smarter.” Could borrowed cultural paradigms, some even learned unconsciously and below the surface, make individual people “smarter?” Could lack of exposure to diverse worldviews potentially limit one’s capacity to accept invitations to see oneself in a different, and potentially more positive, light? Could it also inhibit one’s ability to view others with a greater sense of value than the culture affords to them? We have no solid answer to these questions. However, there is no doubt that some cultures view certain human characteristics more positively than others. There is also no doubt that one’s particular culture plays a huge role in the individual’s self-evaluative process and that different cultures produce dissimilar, culturally created measurements that their members use to evaluate themselves. To further explore the above issues, and how they can be addressed in both teaching and counseling, we will first have to take a deeper look at both the perceptual tradition and culture’s overflowing influence in our lives.

The Perceptual Tradition

The *Perceptual Tradition* is basically the cornerstone of Invitational Education. In a nutshell, it claims that our actions and attitudes are largely determined by the way we perceive ourselves and the world. It is based on the principle that different people will have different, often unquestioned, frames of reference, not all of which promote well-being (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987). Failure to *fully* comprehend the implications of the above two sentences is responsible for much misunderstanding, contention, and unhappiness (Coombs, Avila, & Purkey, 1978).

The ongoing quest to understand human be-

havior can be enhanced by examining the “phenomenal fields” of different individuals (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987, p.30). How do they react to and interpret the cards that life deals them? Just because people have the same experiences, does not mean that they will share the same reactions. Most behavior is likely the result of the perceptual field one has developed. However, many people exercise a sort of “phenomenal absolutism” by just presuming almost everyone interprets reality the same as they do (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987, p. 30). Phenomenal absolutists will assume those who perceive things differently are either somehow incorrectly oriented, dishonest, inexperienced, unintelligent, or mentally unbalanced. They fail to recognize the many diverse interpretations to which our world circumstances lend themselves. Effective communication between two parties requires recognition of diverse perceptual realities (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987).

A “Perceptualist” would say that people’s feelings are manifestations not necessarily of things as they “really” are, but rather they are manifestations of their *perceptions* of reality (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987). Artificial social realities are created all the time and people allow these artificial realities to function as automatic control switches for turning their emotions and deepest feelings on and off at will. One’s interpretation of “truth” comes from one’s perceptions, which perceptions can be ever-so-tacitly manipulated by the phenomenal field that lurks over one as an engineer at a control panel.

One of the hopes of this article is that cross-cultural instruction, done a certain way, can help the perceiver recognize at least four things: (a) He or she has a culturally created frame of reference. (b) This phenomenal

field can be replete with irrational elements. (c) Irrational elements in one's cultural frame of reference can assist in producing a low self-concept that will bring unpleasantness for the individual and those surrounding him or her. (d) Since these frames of reference are created by us (either individually or collectively) we have the existential ability (albeit quite taxing) to replace these irrational elements with ones that are more consistent with sound thought.

When one dares delve into the cross-cultural realm, questions necessarily arise concerning whether our cultural paradigms exercise almost complete subconscious control over us, or, on the other hand, do we easily recognize their often irrational nature yet subscribe to them just to satisfy peer expectations and gain acceptance. This is a difficult question to answer. We would *guess* the answer is somewhere in between. If things were almost all subconscious, they would be extremely difficult to change and would compromise the exercise of personal agency. None of us would like to believe that ultimately we have little or no control over our lives. However, if we all just follow along just to be accepted, while really exercising independent thinking deep inside, it is difficult to believe that *we just pretend* to be attracted to people of a certain weight range, pretend to adopt a fatalistic or rugged individualist world view, pretend to see time in a certain way, and pretend to possess personal space preferences *just to be accepted* even though within ourselves we may subscribe to completely different personal predilections and paradigms. In the U.S., people in "red" states don't seem to go "blue" when in the privacy of the voting booth and vice versa. We would *guess* things lie somewhere between both extremes in that people do have the potential to exer-

cise some control (although likely not total control) and that irrationalities in one's world view are not easily recognized and often have to be brought to one's attention. However, once brought to the surface, individuals could begin the laborious task of overcoming their deleterious influence.

The Power of Cultural Paradigms

Culture wields an often fearsome power to both manipulate and limit our view of the world, of others, and of ourselves. As we grow, other people tell us what reality is like, how we should be, and how we should think. A neatly packaged, culturally created version of happiness is even provided to us free of charge. However, Shakespeare said, "But, O! How bitter a thing it is to look into happiness through another man's eyes!"

The general importance of self-esteem for happiness and overall mental health is basically uncontested in psychological circles (Wang & Ollendick, 2001). Lack of a healthy self-concept is widely considered a risk factor for potential psychological dysfunction (Bednar & Peterson, 1995, as cited in Wang & Ollendick, 2001; Purkey & Novak, 1984; Purkey & Schmidt, 1987). However, self-esteem seems, to a significant extent, to originate by fulfilling culturally mandated standards (Wang & Ollendick, 2001). One constructs a self-concept around social values and judgments that often differ widely between cultures (Mruk, 1995, as cited in Wang & Ollendick, 2001). In other words, people possessing the same characteristics could experience a higher degree of self-esteem in one culture and a lower degree in another. It is widely assumed that the larger the gulf between the *actual self* and the *ought self* (the *ought self* is culturally determined to a significant extent), the more

substantial hit one's self-esteem will encounter. If there is more congruence between the actual and ought selves, it is assumed that better psychological health will result (Wang & Ollendick, 2001).

The intertwining of culture and psychology is actually quite amazing. For example, anorexia nervosa, a common dilemma in more economically privileged classes is almost non-existent in third-world circumstances (Matsumoto, 1986). Schizophrenia, which has been linked to chemical imbalances, abates more quickly in some cultures rather than others (Matsumoto, 1986). Hispanics, Blacks, Asians, and Non-Hispanic Whites born in the U.S. have a higher incidence of psychiatric disorders than people of those same racial types born in other countries who moved to the U.S. later in life (Bean, Perry, & Bedell, 2001; Breslau & Chang, 2006). A study was undertaken involving females from the same socio-economic group (upper middle class) in both Spain and Mexico. It was discovered that they had the same rate of getting an eating disorder, which was probably attributable to their similar social class. However, despite that similarity, there was a very significant difference in the girls' perception of the perfect body. The girls in Spain wanted thinner hips, buttocks, and legs and the girls in Mexico wanted bigger hips, buttocks, and legs (Toro et al., 2006).

The above information can be somewhat representative of what Hall (1976) calls *cultural irrationality*. Cultural irrationality permeates our social world and, most of the time, we simply do not realize it. All cultures have their share of irrationalities and negative attributes. We will never be able to completely ameliorate culturally induced suffering, but we can at least inculcate the

recognition that much suffering is culturally engendered. We see such irrationality all the time among the students in the schools in which we teach. Most students (and probably most adults) have a form of culture-bound self-esteem. They conform to the irrationalities that decide who has got what it takes and who does not. But in a culture-bound or emic self-esteem (emic means within a particular culture or subculture) there are some winners and a lot of losers. What we should desire is more of an etic self-esteem (etic means across cultures) that is not culture-bound but rather more of an existential approach where the individual, armed with cross-cultural knowledge, responsibly and rationally, and I repeat responsibly and rationally, makes individual judgments that determine one's own personal worth and value.

The preceding paragraphs constitute broad issues that cultural instruction in our many different academic disciplines *generally* fails to address. For example, cultural instruction in foreign language classes *tends* to be quite superficial (Ivers, 2005, 2007; Morain, 1983; Webber, 1987). They generally discuss issues such as French bread, the Autobahn, and Jennifer López. As their students leave their classrooms with a greater knowledge of French bread, they walk out into a hallway full of cultural land mines. Anything we can do to deepen our instruction, and familiarize our students with the often irrational power of culture, can better assist them in navigating the often difficult terrain of life. Knowing that Jennifer López is famous and is Hispanic, is not going to create greater flexibility in thinking, deeper cognitive abilities, or create individuals who can change the world.

Cultural Oppression and Self-Concept

Since self-esteem is largely culture-bound, a deeper understanding of the often arbitrary and artificial nature of cultural rules could theoretically assist the student in overcoming cultural influences that contribute to his or her low self-concept. The work of Paulo Freire on oppression can be related to the suffering faced by people who do not conform to cultural dogma.

Although Freire (1970) emphasized economic as well as political oppression to illuminate the plight of underprivileged individuals, his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, forces us to examine what could be termed cultural oppression. Cultural oppression is probably active in all social settings to one degree or another. We see it often in the schools where the non-athletic, the non-beautiful, the non-wealthy, and the non-popular live lives bereft of culturally granted emotional privileges. Students must be provided with educational opportunities that will allow them to liberate themselves from cultural prisons and enable them to be more proactive in creating their own self-concept rather unconditionally accepting the potentially injurious one created for them by the group who has co-opted the popularity. In order to assist students in obtaining higher levels of psychological well-being, it might be advantageous that they understand that their discomfort and insecurities may not be the result of inherent inferiority but rather evidence of cultural irrationality.

Freire (1970) writes, "Liberation is thus a childbirth, and a painful one" (p. 33). Liberation from cultural messages engendered almost from birth can be a taxing transition. These often arbitrary cultural guidelines be-

come seemingly less arbitrary and more concrete as we ingratiate ourselves in any given environment. Thus freeing ourselves from these norms is very difficult being that we do not view them as constructs but rather as absolutes.

Those who are culturally oppressed (probably all of us to one degree or another) for whatever reasons feel what Freire (1970) would term an "irresistible attraction" (p. 49) to those who are the beneficiaries of cultural rewards. Culturally oppressed individuals often invest a big share of their precious lives attempting to mimic the culturally privileged and take part in their lifestyles. For example, people develop eating disorders, consume harmful substances targeted at improving athletic performance, expose themselves to cancer-causing UVA and UVB rays, along with a slew of other destructive activities as ways to conform to socially created irrationalities.

Many young people have the idea that everything the dominant culture says is right despite how absurd it really is! Ozman and Craver (1986) comment,

The oppressor is whoever or whatever serves as an overriding influence that is uncritically accepted or chosen by the oppressed. In Freire's view, oppression will be present wherever one's consciousness is characterized by the condition 'in which to be is to be like, and to be like is to be like the oppressor.' Oppression is, or forces, passivity, and there may be a degree of security in passivity, for nothing is risked. For Freire, however, an education that liberates is painful, for like a childbirth it brings a new person into the world. (p. 208)

Self-deprecation resulting from less than inviting cultural messages is difficult to ameliorate. It becomes quite difficult to accept positive things about oneself after an unflattering self-image is inculcated. We need to instill in our students a little less faith in the cultural proscriptions that continually bombard them. Students need to become “masters of their own thinking” (Freire, 1970, p. 118) instead of falling victim to culturally created standards that may only serve to impair them.

What Should Be Taught?

In a recently published article, Ivers (2007) lamented the superficiality of culture topics treated in the schools. We will again use foreign language classes as an example. He noticed that the typical college Spanish textbooks included cultural topics *such as* food, population figures, bullfighting, soccer, celebrities, music, traditional dances, and holidays.

There is nothing wrong with the above topics, but Ivers (2007) proposed that a little depth could be added to the typically covered areas. The topics don't necessarily have to be for just foreign language classes but could also be utilized in classes in Social Studies, Anthropology, Psychology, English Composition, English Literature, Geography, and probably many others. It is our opinion that deep culture can also be used in counseling, which we will discuss later. Some potentially more consciousness raising cultural issues that can be explored in such classes might be differences in world views concerning beauty, romantic behavior, tolerance for emotional expression, treatment of old people, materialism, respect afforded different professions, attributions concerning success or failure, what is the good life, etc.

Some of the best subject areas we have found for intercultural comparison, and interesting classroom discussion, have been found in the statements of foreign anthropologists who have come to the United States and studied Americans. We understand that the word *American* is problematic, however that is the word the foreign anthropologists used so we will use it here in the colloquial, albeit narrow, use of the term. In her study of Americans, Cerroni-Long (1993) made some observations with which we don't *totally* agree but are instructive nonetheless. She felt that Americans were not very deep intellectually. She found their personalities to be self-promoting and undercutting to potential competitors. She felt that Americans possessed an insulting sense of humor that could be interpreted as jockeying for position or even social flagellation that could be a carry-over from Puritanism or some other sort of socially induced inferiority complex. She described American culture as kind of like a war zone, extant with problems coping, personal insecurity and individual isolation. Cerroni-Long, before her visit to America, had spent some time in the former Soviet Union. She came to the conclusion that conforming to the *right* ideology is just as important in certain American social circles as it was in the former communist block nations.

Another foreign anthropologist, Wasserfall (1993) felt that in America there is no cultural room for anguish, fear, angst, or ambiguity. People were uncomfortable with ambiguity and also had to hide their insecurities behind pure image. A Dutch anthropologist, Pinxten (1993), claims that the American intellectual is basically dead. He says that the typical professor in America takes too much of a business-like approach to knowledge production and publishing, and the re-

sult of all that is *extreme boredom*. He claims that our *current* intellectual soil is not rich enough for inspirational, deep, and thrilling ideas to flourish.

So How Do You Teach All This Stuff?

In 1987, one of the authors had a conversation with some foreign friends that changed his professional life. It all started with a simple question he posed. It was, “What are some of the weird things Americans do?” The friends started talking and did not stop for a good while. The co-author, a doctoral student at the time, had recently experienced a class lecture on detecting *tacit assumptions*. Tacit assumptions are the implicit messages residing within statements. They are usually not immediately obvious, yet they provide the foundational assumptions (sometimes dubious), upon which the declaration is based. Let us look at some of the tacit assumptions behind some of the statements by the foreign friends that the co-author wrote down. Most of the statements are edited to enhance their conciseness.

Statement: “In America we see men helping in the laundromat and in the kitchen. In our country, if a man were to help in the kitchen he is no longer a man.”

Tacit Assumptions: The man must be in control. If he doesn’t exploit his female partner, she will dominate him.

Statement: “Too many women work in America. In my country a question is often asked, ‘If you are so much a man, why does your wife have to work?’ Another saying is that the woman who earns a significant amount of money is ‘more man than her husband.’”

Tacit Assumptions: Making money is basically only a man’s role. A real man provides for all his family’s needs by himself. A real man will not have economic problems.

Statement: “In America there is no life in your celebrations and you never get excited about anything. When I attend church services here, it is boring.”

Tacit Assumptions: Lack of outward emotional expression is a sign of lack of enthusiasm.

Statement: “Unlike Americans, people in my country work to live and enjoy, not just to possess. People don’t enjoy their work here. There is a time for everything. Work isn’t everything. It is just one thing.”

Tacit Assumptions: Work is to be enjoyed rather than endured. The purpose of life is to experience rather than to accumulate stuff.

Statement: “In America, older, adult children often have to pay room and board in their own homes! The parents even encourage them to move out! Don’t the parents love their children here?”

Tacit Assumptions: Familial closeness is more important than personal independence.

The instructor can use actual statements or can simply explain the target culture’s world view and have the students, in groups or in the class as a whole, work on uncovering the tacit assumptions that sustain such a view. The view of the *native culture* should also be addressed with the tacit assumptions supporting its foundation excavated and analyzed. The students should then debate the positives and negatives of both views. It could be that neither view is inviting and each may lack fairness, kindness, and/or rationality. Under those circumstances, the students could possibly invent alternative

views that, if followed, could create a better, more inviting world in which to live. If students come up with, in their opinions, more inviting, honorable, and equitable models of reality, they can be encouraged to live their lives with those new models in place. People living their lives in accordance with just and rational models can contribute, at least in a small way, in helping their culture to become a more pleasant realm and can assist in fomenting individual happiness.

Another potential instructional approach also hails from the deeper, psychological realm. Albert Ellis, one of the 20th Century's preeminent psychologists, developed what he called Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy. Part of the therapy involves recognizing irrationalities in one's own life that, by exercising their powerful yet questionable influence, can unreasonably cause one to experience emotional pain and discomfort (Ellis & Harper, 1997; Ellis, 2001; Rector, 2004). For example, an essential element in Ellis' approach is his ABC Theory of self-disturbing. An approximate diagram of the concept is as follows:

**A. Event/Circumstance ----> B. Beliefs
-----> C. Consequent Reactions**

When used cross-culturally, such a model, with similar A's, will often create vastly different C's. Some cultures have B's that are more rational, inviting, kind, and just than others. We could look at Ellis' ABC concept in the metaphor of a chemical reaction. A is a substance which could be inert, benign, innocuous, until combined with B where, if combined with the wrong B, it can result in a destructive and explosive C. Following are some A's that, filtered through a vast universe of divergent cultural B's, can bring on C's that vary significantly

in *degree* and sometimes even in *kind*.

Comments concerning one being overweight
Personal physical characteristics
Public praise and recognition
Disobedience of children
Being the recipient of certain criticisms
High or low expressiveness of emotion in others
Financial struggles
"Need" to achieve a higher social class
Lack of stylistic clothes
Loss of personal independence or productivity
Personal space issues
Why did this bad thing happen?
Silence
Body odor
Nepotism
Romantic behavior
Accumulation of possessions
Modesty (physical and social)
Friendliness
Ambiguity
Respect afforded different social classes
Respect afforded different achievements
Lack of certain specific achievements
Lack of order

In groups, the students can play with the ABC concept by plugging in different real or potential beliefs (B's) and seeing what reactions (C's) would naturally result. This, again, will allow them to test the rationality of diverse cultural models and, maybe for the first time, critically examine their own. If the students find their native cultural models to be wanting, they can examine ways to change their personal thinking to help to create a better emotional life for themselves and possibly a more just world.

Cross-Cultural Instruction and Counseling

There is no doubt that Ellis' ABC concept can be a tool for counselors as well as teachers. No one can doubt the importance of methods in counseling that will serve to enhance the client's recognition of elements that impair his or her self-concept. The professions of psychology and counseling have long recognized the powerful influences of culture on people's self-esteem. Humanistic Psychology and Multicultural Counseling and Therapy, for example, have illustrated the power of culture to influence individuals, both positively and negatively. Humanistic psychology was created as a reaction to behaviorism and psychoanalysis in an attempt to develop a more holistic approach to understanding and counseling humans.

Abraham Maslow, one of the major theorists in humanistic psychology, developed a theory of human development and a hierarchy of human needs. The highest stage of development in Maslow's hierarchy is called self-actualization. People who attain self-actualization, according to Maslow, make up less than 1% of the population and have certain traits, values, and behaviors in common (Maslow, 1970).

One particular trait of self-actualized people is an ability to recognize the positive and negative aspects of their culture and therefore refuse to participate in the negatives as far as they affect others and themselves. And along with that, self-actualized people are not adversely affected when they do not measure up to unnecessary culturally created artificial needs (Maslow, 1970).

Multicultural Counseling and Therapy (MCT) also works from a contextual per-

spective. Clients and their problems are not viewed in isolation, but in a cultural context. Clients also are conceptualized as moving through different stages of cultural consciousness. These stages include *pre-encounter*, *encounter*, *immersion/emersion*, and *internalization* (Ivey, Ivey, Myers, & Sweeney, 2005; Ivey, 1995).

Individuals in the *pre-encounter* stage of cultural awareness tend to have little or no cognizance about how their culture influences them. They are in a place of "naiveté with acceptance of the status quo" (Ivey et al., 2005, p. 256). Counselors working with these clients may employ various types of sensorimotor questions to help increase their cultural awareness. For example, clients may come into counseling exhibiting very low self-esteem, and the counselor may ask them to describe a situation in which they felt particularly vulnerable. The counselor may help the clients to describe the situation by asking specific questions, such as:

- “What are you seeing (in the situation where you feel vulnerable)?”
- “What are you hearing?”
- “What are people saying?”
- “What are you feeling in your body?”

As clients gain awareness of what they are seeing, hearing, experiencing, and feeling, they become more aware of their cultural context, and move towards the *encounter* stage of cultural awareness.

In Ivey's *encounter* stage, clients begin to gain awareness of their culture and how it affects them. They also begin to put names to their experiences. For example, the client with low self-esteem might name his or her particular situation "inadequacy" or "not

sizing up to others' expectations." When a name is given to a particular situation it becomes more tangible and allows clients to recognize other similar circumstances in which they felt, for example, "inadequate." When clients are able to recognize patterns of similar cultural situations, they move to Ivey's *immersion/emersion* stage of cultural awareness. In this stage, clients are able to not only recognize similar situations or patterns, but also reflect on what these patterns say about them as a person or about their particular culture, community, or group. Questions counselors may use to elicit pattern development and reflection are:

"How is this situation similar to others that you have experienced?"
"What does this pattern say about you or your culture?"

As clients gain more awareness of patterns related to particular situations, they become more able to see other perspectives.

Being able to think dialectically, or seeing situations from multiple perspectives, is a key aspect of Ivey's *internalization* stage of cultural awareness. Useful questions to help people move to this stage might be:

"How would this situation look differently from a different cultural perspective?"
"What belief were you operating under when you felt (for example) inadequate?"
"Where did this belief come from?"
"What flaws can you see in this cultural belief?"
"How can you change it?" and
"How do you imagine your life being different without that culturally created belief?"

As people recognize other perspectives and gain awareness of irrational and unhealthy culturally created realities, they become more able to *liberate* themselves from these unhealthy beliefs, as Ivey (1995) describes it, and create new and healthier realities.

Aspects of MCT techniques also may be incorporated into classroom settings. For example, instructors using MCT may describe a particular story or situation in which potentially uninviting culturally constructed beliefs are present. In the telling of the story or situation, instructors pay particular attention to detail such as describing what people might be saying in this particular situation, what they might be hearing, and what they might be feeling. Of course, participation from the class using thought-stimulating questions is recommended. Next, instructors can help the class give the situation or problem a name, and describe different scenarios in which similar circumstances have played out. Then, instructors can demonstrate how the same situation might play out differently in different cultures with different culturally constructed beliefs. Finally, instructors can divide the class into small groups to discuss what the culturally created belief might be, and how the belief might be changed or modified to cultivate improved self-concepts.

Conclusion

Socrates said, "the unexamined life is not worth living." The unexamined culture may also not be worth living. When people do not critically examine their own culture, they become unknowing agents of the prevailing cultural consciousness. Cultural instruction, if done with the above psychological principles in mind, can lead our students into creating more endogenous world

views rather than being automatized into exogenous, potentially deleterious views of others and of themselves. It is also likely they will be provided with mental models that will enrich their overall cognitive lives. Einstein said, "Only daring speculation can lead us further and not accumulation of facts" (Magee, 2006, p. 221). Researchers

into good teaching are now saying that successful teachers are the ones who explore the great questions, new paradigms, and interesting uncertainties (Bain, 2004; Nilson, 1998). The fields of teaching and counseling could be enhanced by more critical analysis of disinviting cultural paradigms, greater depth, and more daring speculation.

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